

City Council Minutes
Joint meeting with Library Trustees,
School Committee and Housing Authority
Tuesday, February 9, 2016
City Hall Auditorium
7:00 pm

1. Call to Order at 7:03 pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilor Einson.
3. Roll Call – members present were Councilor Scorzoni, Councilor Sickorez, Councilor Sherwood, Councilor Einson, Councilor McMilleon, Councilor Stanganelli, Councilor Bartley, Councilor McClure and Councilor Lavoie
4. Act on minutes – Councilor Stanganelli moved to accept the minutes of January 12, 2016 with a correction to his vote on 2016-011. Councilor McMilleon seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

5. Correspondence

a. President/Vice President Communications

Councilor Scorzoni stated that they received some correspondence from Bill Scott in the Community and Economic Development Office and he has requested a workshop with the City Council to talk about potential remediation of the Microfab site in conjunction with the EPA. It looks like we are going to try to schedule that on February 23, 2016 prior to the Finance Meeting at 6:00pm to hear from Bill and EPA and then after go right into the Finance Committee meeting.

Councilor Sherwood stated that it has also been discussed about having a Rules Committee meeting at that same time.

Councilor Lavoie stated that they could just move the Rules Committee meeting.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that the School District Financial Analysis Report was conducted by Melanson and Heath and has been finalized and the Council is in receipt of the report. There has been interest expressed to further understand it and have discussion with both Melanson and Heath and the Administration as well on that. They have had a preliminary conversation with the Mayor and their hope is to schedule that as an agenda item for the March City Council meeting.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that also it was discussed to set up a workshop to discuss our internal rules and our makeup within the City Council. It was tossed around that on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 at the end of the Finance Committee meeting to have this as an agenda item. It looks like that Finance meeting will be a light workload so they will try to get that set up.

Councilor Sherwood commented about Amesbury Soccer Association is having a fundraiser Saturday, March 12, at 7 o'clock at the Custom House Maritime Museum in Newburyport and there is more information on their website.

b. Communication from Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

2016-003A Fill Vacancy on School Committee at joint hearing

- Applicants: a.) David W. Andrews, 30 Summit Ave.
b.) Nicholas Wheeler, 33 Adams Ct.
c.) Jacob Karlins, 2 Glen Devin

The School Committee opened their meeting. Mayor Gray called the roll and present was Deb LaValley, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Peter Hoyt, Robert Chamberlain and Mayor Gray.

Each candidate got up to speak:

David W. Andrews of 30 Summit Ave states he has been previously on the Cultural Council and has been interested in the School Committee budgets which are hard to find a copy of a line by line description of the budget and decided to run. He stated that his background is in Science in the Biotech industry but has taught chemistry for a couple of years. He feels he would bring something interesting to the School Committee on how funds are spent and what various priorities are and if not lower the budget to at least stop the accelerating progression of the budget.

Peter Hoyt asked what he saw as the greatest challenges facing the Amesbury Public Schools moving forward and conversely could you share what you feel are the greatest successes in Amesbury in the School.

Mr. Andrews stated that the greatest successes are obviously the Quality of the Teachers. He stated since he doesn't have the data, the budget priorities seem to be skewed and he feels it is imprudent of him to make judgement since he has not seen numbers but he feels a lot of money is spent on special education and on various electronic equipment and he wonders if there is some way to bring that under control.

Ms. LaValley asked what he feels the main role of the School Committee is.

Mr. Andrews stated that he felt it was oversight over the superintendent and the school system.

Ms. LaValley asked what steps has he taken to prepare himself to be on the School Committee.

Mr. Andrews stated that he would talk to teachers and administrators at the schools and hopefully get a copy of the budget.

Rob Chamberlain asked if he had and budget or finance experience in his background and how does he define excellence when it comes to education.

Mr. Andrews stated that in his career of Bio-Tech he ran large analytical department in several Biopharmaceutical Companies and that involved constructing budgets to control salaries and major equipment purchases which had to fit into the overall budget of the company and various competing needs of other departments. He would define excellence as to how well one's teachers inspire the students.

Mayor Gray asked how he feels today's educational establishment in general prepares students for the technology component of the 21st Century.

Mr. Andrews stated there is an emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and he feels there is too much emphasis on it. If you educate students for the current technologies, instrumentation and techniques, by the time they graduate, those techniques will all be changes. What you need to do is to prepare students to be critical thinkers and be prepared to adapt to different conditions.

Councilor Einson asked if he had anything in particular that stood out in Dr. Reese's Entry Report Findings.

Mr. Andrews stated he has not seen the document.

Councilor Scorzoni asked how he can advance the cause of the schools and maneuver through all the stakeholders that are also part of that community fabric as well.

Mr. Andrews stated that we are all in this together and the schools obviously need funding and support from the City Council but the City needs the schools. We are all in this together and let's work on this together.

Councilor Lavoie asked when he moved into Amesbury.

Mr. Andrews stated he moved in 9 years ago.

Councilor Stanganelli asked if he had could make changes to the early college program at the High School what would they be.

Mr. Andrews stated he was not familiar with it.

Councilor Scorzoni thanked Mr. Andrews for applying and also for his service on the Cultural Council and then called the next applicant.

Nicholas Wheeler, 33 Adams Ct. stated that he is interested in being on the School Committee to help out in the community and do what he can. He stated that he has an Associate's Degree from Middlesex Community College and a Bachelor's degree from Fitchburg State. He has lived in town for five years. His background is in Engineering at a fairly midsize firm in Andover, MA where he has been for 9 ½ years.

Peter Hoyt asked what he saw as the greatest challenges facing the Amesbury Public Schools moving forward and conversely could you share what you feel are the greatest successes in Amesbury in the School.

Mr. Wheeler stated that as far as challenges go, he has followed the school budget the last couple of years and it can be a fairly contentious issue especially given rising healthcare costs and rising special education costs and dwindling funding from the state so he feels the budget is one of the biggest ongoing issues right with the schools. As far as success stories, he is pleased with the early college program and he is proud to hear all of the success stories that have come out of it.

Ms. LaValley asked what he feels the main role of the School Committee is.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he feels the largest role is ensure continued improvement in the students and overseeing the Superintendent and developing policy for the school system.

Ms. LaValley asked what steps has he taken to prepare himself to be on the School Committee.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he has been attending the School Committee meetings and has been to a number of budget hearings over the last few cycles and has taken an all-day training course offered by the Mass. Association of School Committees to better help understand procedures and responsibilities that go into such a role.

Mr. Chamberlain asked how Mr. Wheeler would define excellence and if he had any ideas on what he would improve on in the budget process.

Mr. Wheeler stated that as far as excellence he would think would be test scores; that students are testing well and proving that they are learning what they are being taught and that the students are enjoying being there and the teachers are fulfilled in teaching with the students. He feels that the community forum that was held for the School budget was a great start for improvement for the budget process.

Mayor Gray asked how he feels today's educational establishment in general prepares students for the technology component of the 21st Century.

Mr. Wheeler stated that as someone who went to a technical high school he would like to see shop classes and the like brought back. He feels learning some technical skills are an alternative for non-traditional path students. As far as the emphasis on technology it is important in order to raise well rounded students.

Councilor Stanganelli asked relative to the early college program is there anything that he would like to see changed or added.

Mr. Wheeler stated he feels it is already a great program but if there is a way to expand the scope of it or get more students interested he would like to see that.

Councilor Stanganelli asked about integrated learning curriculum and if he had any suggestions for improving.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he is not that familiar with the topic and would have to look into it.

Councilor McMilleon asked in his observations, what would be his priorities in the budget cycle.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he would like to get more feedback from the Council during budget season and work more closely together on the budget; and there is more need to reach out to our delegates for state funding.

Councilor McMilleon asked why he ran for Council instead of School Committee.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he feels he could have had a little more impact as a City Councilor but this is still a way to help out as best he can.

Councilor Lavoie stated that they had received notification from MASC of Mr. Wheeler's coursework. He asked if there were written materials and if he could borrow it to read.

Mr. Wheeler stated he could borrow it.

Councilor Einson asked during that training if there was anything he found surprising or that he didn't know about.

Mr. Wheeler stated that there was nothing surprising but there were some moments that were educational and some that were funny like the Ethics training which was a little over the top.

Councilor Scorzoni asked if he could speak a little on how as a School Committee member he could move the process of a new AES forward.

Mr. Wheeler states that the firm that he works for has done quite a bit of design work for elementary and post-secondary schools so he can weigh in a little bit on the actual construction and budgeting process of it. As far as the MSBA process itself goes, Dr. Reese is cautiously optimistic about proceeding forward.

Councilor Scorzoni thanked Mr. Wheeler and called the next candidate Jacob Karlins who was not present. Councilor Scorzoni read for the record some of the background that Mr. Karlins presented the Council. He states that he has experience working as an ESL Teacher and a Teacher's Aide. He is pursuing a Master's Degree in English. He holds a BA in English from Oberlin College and has lived abroad for a while and in Amesbury for 3 years. He has not held any city offices and lives at 2 Glen Devin.

Councilor Scorzoni asked for nominations for the candidates.

Ms. LaValley nominated Nicholas Wheeler; Councilor McMilleon seconded.
Councilor McClure nominated David Andrews; Councilor Sherwood seconded.
Councilor Lavoie asked for clarification how the vote would work being 5 School Members and 9 Councilors if it was a majority of the 14 who would take the seat.

A Roll Call vote was taken:

Councilor Einson: Wheeler

Councilor Lavoie: Wheeler

Councilor McClure: Andrews

Councilor McMilleon: Wheeler

Councilor Sherwood: Wheeler

Councilor Sickorez: Andrews

Councilor Stanganelli: Wheeler

Councilor Bartley: Andrews

Councilor Scorzoni: Wheeler

Mayor Gray: Andrews

Ms. LaValley: Wheeler

Mr. Chamberlain: Wheeler

Mr. Hoyt: Wheeler

Ms. Marinopoulos: Wheeler

10-Wheeler; 4-Andrews (Wheeler takes it)

Councilor Scorzoni thanked all the candidates for their interest and their service and reminded Mr. Wheeler to meet with the Clerk to get sworn in.

Ms. LaValley commented that the community forum for the two finalists for the High School Principal position has been rescheduled and will be tomorrow night in the High School Auditorium from 6:30 pm to 8 pm. She invited the public to come and meet the candidates and ask some questions.

Mayor Gray moved to adjourn the School Committee meeting and Ms. Marinopoulos seconded and it was dismissed.

2016-004A Fill Vacancy on Housing Authority at joint hearing

Applicants: a.) James N. Thivierge, 8 School St.

b.) Kendra Amaral, 2 Woodwell Cir.

c.) Roger Dieker, 448 Main St.

Councilor Scorzoni asked the Housing Authority to open their meeting.

Mr. Noon opened the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Present for Housing Authority were:
Ralph Noon, Philip Dandurant and David Hildt.

Councilor Scorzoni asked the first candidate to speak.

James N. Thivierge of 8 School St. stated that he is a life-long resident and has a Master's Degree in Public Administration and a Bachelor's degree in American Studies and took a lot of pre-requisite courses at Northern Essex Community College in order to qualify for the graduate programs. He has 70+ courses from Human Services of the State of Massachusetts; Management, Management/Operations, one with the Federal Reserve for Management Skills. As he worked his way up there was a week long course in Supervisory and a course in how to manage an agency budget and about 65 others. He wrote a database to keep track of training. He is a United States Navy Veteran with an Honorable Discharge, good conduct and national defense medals. He is currently the principle of Think 2000. His latest venture is local government in a microsecond. It is basically a database generated with external to do literally what they do every year from the real estate to the recap sheet classification. He has been active in the community for years. He was on the Bartley Museum Trustees, has played sports in town, he has been President of the Selectmen's Association, on the Executive Board prior to the change in government; a five time Chairman of the Board over 15 years; he has been on the School Committee, Finance Committee, Bylaw Committee, Town Meeting for nearly a quarter of a century and various State Committees. He is a Senior Citizen and feels he can bring his background experience and training to this position.

Mr. Noon asked if he had any direct experience in working with the Housing Authority.

Mr. Thivierge stated that his capacity of the policy maker in the community he did deal with the policy maker group at the state level. He stated he never had much to do with the Housing Authority but he was on one committee with the Housing Director. He studied to be a city/town manager and operations are operations and budgets are budgets and having read the minutes over the last 12 months he feels he has the skills for this position.

Councilor Sherwood asked what he sees as the needs of the Housing Authority and some of the challenges that it might be facing currently.

Mr. Thivierge stated that he is in the first wave of the baby boomers and population is constantly getting older so capacity is going to be one thing. The age of the buildings is another. The budget is always a challenge and demographics is currently a challenge. He feels that all of his education and all of his work experiences would benefit him in filling this position.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that the next candidate, Kendra Amaral, sent correspondence to the City Council that she was unable to attend the meeting tonight. The reason being is that she is Assistant Town Manager in the Town of Wilmington and they are in the middle of their budget process. She provided a detailed information packet that lines up her experience. She is certainly interested in the position. Aside from being Assistant Town Manager in the Town of Wilmington, she did just move back into Amesbury. Previously she was the Deputy Director of Planning and Development in the city of Lowell and was the Chief of Staff in the Town of Amesbury for four years between 2006 and 2010. One of those roles in particular was working as a liaison to the Amesbury

Housing Board which she touts in her cover letter to the City Council. She has applied, she is interested and she has apologized for not being able to be here tonight and that information was provided to all of us.

Councilor Scorzoni called the next applicant Mr. Roger Dieker and Mr. Dieker was not present at the meeting. He states that he is an Amesbury Resident who is a commercial Real Estate Broker and owns several commercial/multi-family properties and is well versed in Landlord/Tenant relationships. He has a degree from Bradley University, and MBA from Keller Graduate School in Chicago and has represented landlords and tenants as a commercial real estate broker for CB Richard Ellis.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that seeing there are no questions from anyone regarding the applicants that he would like to take nominations.

Councilor Lavoie nominated Kendra Amaral. Councilor McMilleon seconded. Councilor Stanganelli nominated James N. Thivierge. Councilor McClure seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Einson – Kendra Amaral
Councilor Lavoie – Kendra Amaral
Councilor McClure – Kendra Amaral
Councilor McMilleon – Kendra Amaral
Councilor Sherwood – Kendra Amaral
Councilor Sickorez – Kendra Amaral
Councilor Stanganelli – Jim Thivierge
Councilor Bartley – Kendra Amaral
Councilor Scorzoni – Jim Thivierge
Philip Dandurant – Kendra Amaral
David Hildt – Kendra Amaral
Ralph Noon – Kendra Amaral
10 – Kendra Amaral and 2 – Jim Thivierge

Mr. Noon of the Housing Authority Board closed their meeting.

2016-005A Fill (2) Vacancies on Library Board of Trustees at joint hearing

- Applicants: a.) Kristin TenBensel, 39 Aubin St.
b.) Bethany Sullivan, 53 Glen Devin
c.) Delia A. Rinaldi, 25 Cedar St. Unit 19
d.) Martha Jamison, 30 Summit Ave
e.) Katherine J. Currie, 6 Field St.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that they would be moving on to the (2) Library Board of Trustee vacancies and the five applicants. He stated that they will have each candidate come before us and go through the nomination process for each seat one at a time.

Gail Browne called the Library Board to order. Library Trustee members present: Rebecca Jordan, Steve Dunford, Brenda Rich, Mary Dunford and Gail Browne.

Councilor Scorzoni called the first applicant, Kristen tenBensel to the podium.

Ms. tenBensel stated that she was appointed for a six month term last year and did run this last election but did not get elected. In her six month term she attended the Trustee orientation and became an active member of the Friends and as a liaison she served on the Long Range Planning Committee and the Conservation Committee. She stated she is very passionate about the library and would like to continue her service to the City of Amesbury as a Trustee.

Ms. Browne asked what she saw as the Library's biggest challenge moving forward and on the flip side what is a positive that the Library is currently doing.

Ms. tenBensel stated that the biggest challenge is the building. It is really old and there are a lot of issues with it on the other hand the library is exceptionally adept at adapting to this century and having a lot of the resources available. It is not just about the books, the programming is exceptional and the staff is exceptional and we have a real gem in our midst.

Mr. Dunford asked as a Library Trustee, how she would move forward any plans for construction of a new Library.

Ms. tenBensel stated that it is already identified in the long range plan and would involve fundraising and grant raising and assessment of what the community needs going forward.

Councilor Sherwood asked her what the most significant finding was from being part of the strategic plan process.

Ms. tenBensel stated that they did a lot a brainstorming and it defined what role the Library plays in our community and what direction we need to go in as an institution.

Councilor Stanganelli asked what were the conclusions and her observations with those conclusions.

Ms. tenBensel stated that being in touch with the needs of the electronic age and having accessibility in relevance to how our society changes, having it be a community resource and also the need for a new building was clear as well. The institution as a whole and what it brings to the community were the high points.

Councilor Scorzoni call the next applicant; Bethany Sullivan.

Ms. Sullivan stated that she lives at 53 Glen Devin and has been here for 8 years. She and her husband chose Amesbury after an afternoon of apple picking at Cider Hill Farm

and fell in love with the community. They have had three children since they moved here and the Library is where she started to feel part of the community. They started going with her children and realized how important the Library is to the community and to her family. When she saw that there were vacancies after the election she decided this is something she would like to get involved in. One most important thing to her is civic responsibility and getting involved in your town and being informed of what is going on. She would like to bring that commitment to the Library and would work hard if she is appointed.

Ms. Browne asked what she saw as the Library's biggest challenge moving forward and on the flip side what is a positive that the Library is currently doing.

Ms. Sullivan stated that she feels the budget is always a challenge and having to try to do more with less and stay up to date with the latest technology to keep people interested and coming in the door. A strength she sees is that it seems that we are doing a lot with what we are given and she takes full advantage of the expanded museum pass program. The Library is doing a great job.

Mr. Dunford asked as a Library Trustee, how she would move forward any plans for reconstruction or replacement of old systems that no longer work.

Ms. Sullivan stated that raising money for a new building would be a steep challenge in the short term. You would have to get the whole community excited and behind some sort of large fundraising project to upgrade the failing systems. As long as we keep the Library alive in the community hopefully we can fundraise or find some way to help with the idea of getting a new Library eventually if we can get the community behind us and keep everybody involved.

Councilor Sherwood asked what she sees as the role the Library plays in the community.

Ms. Sullivan stated that for her she feels it brings the community together. The programs such as the summer ice cream event brings hundreds of children out and it is wonderful for those kinds of things to happen to bring families together and to get the community involved and interested. She feels that it is important that if there is going to be the lack of a youth center and these programs are available through the Library and get the kids in the door, they are going to start doing positive things and hopefully not the negative things.

Councilor Scorzoni called the next candidate; Delia Rinaldi.

Ms. Rinaldi stated that she has been in Amesbury from 3 years. She noticed at election time that there was still an opening on the Board and being a fan of Libraries she was interested. She stated that she does not have extensive experience with budgets but does know that Libraries are important to communities. She volunteers at the bookstore in the Library basement. She sees it is a safe haven for teenagers and a place that

introduces books to children due to multiple programs and she supports it and wants to help with whatever she can.

Ms. Browne asked what she saw as the Library's biggest challenge moving forward and on the flip side what is the Library's biggest asset.

Ms. Sullivan stated that obviously the biggest challenge is space as well as the budget. She loves the building and would like to see it expanded. She also wants to see it stay in town for its easy access and walking distance from the schools. She stated that budgeting is a problem every place in town and we just have to figure out a way to get the most for your money and provide the best services. She commented that the best asset is that she sees it as a safe haven and an introduction to books. There are a lot of programs getting the community involved. Getting kids involved with books cannot be done too early.

Mr. Dunford asked as a Library Trustee, what she thinks she can bring to the table to move construction or new construction along.

Ms. Sullivan stated that she would obviously bring enthusiasm. She stated she has worked on committees before and done fundraising in the past. She said she does not have any expertise but is a quick learner and supports the Library to put in the time and effort to help make it work.

Councilor Scorzoni asked if she saw opportunities to collaborate with our neighbors, Salisbury and Newburyport with resources.

Ms. Sullivan stated that most libraries collaborate with resources and book lending so that they all don't have to have large stocks of books. Every town needs to have a library in place. She finds that very important.

Councilor Scorzoni called the next applicant, Martha Jamison.

Ms. Jamison stated that she has been a resident for 9 years and feels it is hard not to be enthusiastic about our Library. She loves that fact that a Library can be the heartbeat of a community and we have one. She commented that she has a Bachelor's Degree in British and American Poetry and Art History followed by a Master's Degree in Finance. She stated that most of her career has been spent in running information technology for various industries but particularly she ran IT for the City of Concord New Hampshire for a couple of years and one of her projects there was IT for the Library where she had to negotiate with Comcast for internet access for the Library and making sure you get all the services that are available to Libraries without having to purchase them and also looking for grants to help a Library along. She would love to help our Library move forward.

Ms. Browne asked what she saw as the Library's biggest challenge moving forward and on the flip side what is a positive that the Library is currently doing.

Ms. Jamison stated that the challenges are that you want to keep running the current programs and bringing in everything you can however there are times when the budget does not cover that. She feels the city needs to step up to some extent and stand behind the Library and make sure everyone knows how important it is so we can draw other people in whether it is corporations or city or state funding. If the city doesn't stand behind it first it is really hard to ask everybody else to do that. So she feels the challenge might be at the time of difficult budget to make sure that all the parties concerned remain involved and stand behind the Library.

Mr. Dunford asked as a Library Trustee, what special talents she can bring to facilitate the advancement of a possible reconstruction or a new Library.

Ms. Jamison stated that there is something that is not on her resume because she really didn't want to be hired to do it again but for 5 or 6 years she was the IT Director for a startup company that was going public and because they couldn't afford to have a person in that job and pay me as I wanted to be reimbursed, they asked me to be Director of Facilities as well. Then when I agreed they surprised me by saying we need to move to a new building, expand to two new floors and completely refit the building and since you are Facilities Director would you please find the right people, do the contracts and negotiate with the unions and whatever and make this all happen. So she does have extensive negotiating skills.

Councilor Sickorez asked what she thought the next generation library will look like.

Ms. Jamison stated that there will be books and lots more bright colors and lights and computer terminals and e-books and e-magazines and lots more stimulating things in libraries. The programs we have today is the beginning of that. There is a program where kids who are having trouble reading can read to a dog. They come into the Library and sit with this lovely dog and read to it because it might make it easier than reading in front of your Mom or Teacher or a reading Coach. This is the kind of thing that libraries can do and it is not all high technology. We have to reach out because it is not just little kids, we have to reach out to seniors and bring them back to the libraries. There are libraries that have cafes because they find that people want to spend time in the library and appreciate the chance to sit quietly with a cup of coffee and read a book. Those are ideas we have to look at and we have to let the community tell us what they would like their new library to look like.

Councilor Stanganelli asked how long ago it was that she held that position.

Ms. Jamison stated it was approximately 11 years ago.

Councilor Einson asked how she would respond to those who state that because of the age of technology that we don't need books anymore.

Ms. Jamison stated that she works for a company now whose entire focus is on electronic databases, electronic books and electronic magazines and she is in touch with libraries and folks who think about libraries a lot. She gets e-mail every day with information from focus groups about products they are considering and not all are in favor of electronic everything all the time. She finds young children still fascinated with a book. There is something about learning to read and being able to read anything you want.

Councilor Stanganelli asked how she compares her experience to fundraising for a project to reconstruct, expand or build a new Library.

Ms. Jamison stated that much of her experience is not relevant at all. The techniques are similar in doing the research to find out who or what might be interested in funding your project and then make sure you make the personal contacts that are necessary. Bake sales are all well and good but that is not going to build a library. We need to look for other means.

Councilor Scorzoni called the next applicant; Katherine Currie.

Ms. Currie stated that she is a stay at home Mom with three children and any free time she has she devotes to Our Neighbors Table, the Amesbury Soccer Association, PTO at Cashman and is the Membership Secretary of the Friends for the Amesbury Public Library. She would like to be a Trustee for the Library as well and feels the two would dovetail. She feels the Library plays a great role in the Community as a hub of learning and education and socializing. It is a great place to go for almost anything you need.

Ms. Browne asked what she saw as the Library's biggest challenge moving forward and on the flip side what is a positive that the Library is currently doing.

Ms. Currie stated that the biggest challenge is the building itself. The lack of space and the lack of handicapped accessibility, not having an elevator is a big problem; the electricity in the building, the heat and the air conditioning are not good. The building is beautiful but it is just not big enough. It would be a shame to scrap it and start somewhere else, it needs to be expanded though. The strengths are the programs and the staff.

Mr. Dunford asked as a Library Trustee, what special talents she can bring to facilitate the advancement of a possible reconstruction or a new Library.

Ms. Currie stated that before she became a stay at home mom she had many years of administrative professional background and she was a property manager. She stated that it involved working with a great deal of vendors and juggling quotes and getting contracts and working with sub-contractors. She stated that if she were to get behind a project like that she would start with local fundraising; local larger businesses; grants and get the community behind it through social media.

Councilor Sherwood asked as a user of the Library what you see as some of the primary functions that our Library serves.

Ms. Currie stated that it is a nice place for everyone; teens that could be at risk can go downstairs to the teen room which has a lot of cool programs. Anyone having trouble finding employment can go there and use free Wi-Fi. If someone is traveling through they can charge their electronic devices and sit and read and relax and you can access the whole Merrimack Valley Consortium for almost anything you need.

Councilor Scorzoni accepted nominations.

Councilor Einson nominated Kristen tenBensel and Rebecca Jordan seconded.

Councilor McClure nominated Martha Jamison and Mary Dunford seconded.

Councilor Sickorez nominated Katherine Currie and Councilor Sherwood seconded.

Gail Browne asked for clarification of how the vote would be taken.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that whoever gets appointed in the first round their name would be taken off and then we would take nominations again and vote again.

Councilor Lavoie nominated Bethany Sullivan and Councilor Stanganelli seconded.

Councilor Einson nominated Delia Rinaldi and Councilor Bartley seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Einson – Kristen tenBensel

Councilor Lavoie – Kristen tenBensel

Councilor McClure – Martha Jamison

Councilor Sherwood – Martha Jamison

Councilor Sickorez – Martha Jamison

Councilor Stanganelli – Martha Jamison

Councilor Bartley – Martha Jamison

Councilor Scorzoni – Kristen tenBensel

Gail Brown – Kristen tenBensel

Mary Dunford – Martha Jamison

Brenda Rich – Kristen tenBensel

Stephen Dunford – Martha Jamison

Rebecca Jordan – Kristen tenBensel

7-Martha Jamison/6-Kristen tenBensel; Martha Jamison takes first seat.

Councilor Scorzoni then stated that they will now take nominations for the second seat. There are now four candidates.

Councilor McClure nominated Bethany Sullivan and Councilor Stanganelli seconded.

Councilor Bartley nominated Delia Rinaldi and Councilor Sickorez seconded.

Councilor Lavoie nominated Kristen tenBensel and Rebecca Jordan seconded.

Councilor Sherwood nominated Katherine Currie and Councilor Sickorez seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Einson – Delia Rinaldi

Councilor Lavoie – Kristen tenBensel

Councilor McClure – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Sherwood – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Sickorez – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Stanganelli – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Bartley – Delia Rinaldi

Councilor Scorzoni – Kristen tenBensel

Gail Brown – Kristen tenBensel

Mary Dunford – Bethany Sullivan

Brenda Rich – Kristen tenBensel

Stephen Dunford – Bethany Sullivan

Rebecca Jordan – Kristen tenBensel

6 – Bethany Sullivan/5 – Kristen tenBensel/2 – Delia Rinaldi

There was discussion as to whether another round of vote must be taken. The City Clerk stated that in her recollection from past experience it has been just who got the most votes.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that they will take a second round of vote.

Councilor Einson – Kristen tenBensel

Councilor Lavoie – Kristen tenBensel

Councilor McClure – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Sherwood – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Sickorez – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Stanganelli – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Bartley – Bethany Sullivan

Councilor Scorzoni – Kristen tenBensel

Gail Brown – Kristen tenBensel

Mary Dunford – Bethany Sullivan

Brenda Rich – Kristen tenBensel

Stephen Dunford – Bethany Sullivan

Rebecca Jordan – Kristen tenBensel

7 – Bethany Sullivan/ 6 – Kristen tenBensel – Bethany Sullivan takes the second seat.

Gail Browne closed the Library Trustee meeting and the City Council took a 2 minute recess.

2016-021 Warrant for March 1, 2016 Presidential Primary Election

Councilor Sherwood read the warrant into the record.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to adopt as submitted. Councilor McClure seconded and it was voted Unanimous

c. Council Communications, Announcements and Committee Reports

Rules & Procedures Committee Update

Councilor Einson stated that the Rules and Procedures Committee had their first meeting on January 26, 2016 and they planned an information meeting which tentatively will be March 22, 2016 to review the areas already prioritized for review by the Rules Committee and to gather information from all interested City Councilors regarding the areas of interest within the rules for updating or modifying. The meeting will be limited and will not be for fashioning or debating changes; it will simply help focus the Rule Committees efforts in developing composed changes.

6. Appointments

2016-016 Re-appointment of Eric Eby to the Traffic and Transportation Commission for a term to expire December 31, 2018.

Mr. Eby was not present.

Councilor Lavoie moved to appoint. Councilor Sickorez seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

2016-019 Appointment of Bonnie Brady to the Amesbury Cultural Council for a term to expire June 30, 2018.

Ms. Brady of 8 Birchmeadow Rd stated that she has been an Amesbury resident for 11 years. She has been attending the Cultural Council meetings since August and has participated as she can as a non-member when they want outside input, also making copies and mailing things. She helped with the Studio Tour and participated in that in 2014 and 2015. She is a small business owner in town called Silver Breeze which is located in Blue Wave Art Gallery. She is moving to her own space at 18 Friend St. She has an Art Degree from Binghamton University majoring in Art and a Master's Degree in Education specializing in Adult Learning.

Councilor Bartley moved to appoint Bonnie Brady to the Amesbury Cultural Council. Councilor Einson seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

2016-022 Appointments to the Traffic and Transportation Commission for a term to expire February 9, 2019.

Re-appoint – Lauren Tirone as Amesbury Police Department Representative

Appoint – James Nolan as Amesbury Fire Department Representative
Appoint – Robert Desmarais as Department of Public Works Representative

Councilor Scorzoni stated that an Ordinance was passed last session to re-organize the role and makeup of the Traffic Commission and as part of that order there was a stipulation that the City Council President is required to appoint three members to serve on that commission representing the Police Department, the Fire Department and the Department of Public Works. Each candidate will serve a three year term, they are existing employees of the city that many of us know very well and these names have been vetted by the Mayor's Office ahead of time. Candidates are here but I don't know that we need them to make their case on this.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to accept 2016-022 as presented. Councilor McClure seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

7. Licenses & Permits – FYI-attached list

Councilor McClure moved to approve the list of licenses. Councilor Stanganelli seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

8. Public Comment

James Thivierge commented on the presidential debates and the reference of their positions on Iraq. Mass. State GDP is \$460 billion; Afghanistan GDP is \$20 billion and Iraq is about \$224 billion. He explained that Massachusetts spends a trillion dollars a year on Iraq and Afghanistan and it drove our annual deficit to \$1.3 trillion dollars and we had a crisis in 2008 that nearly imploded the world economy. Fortunately the deficit is now the deficit is at \$430 billion and interest rates are historically low. He compared that to the Romney Administration when they lost an electoral vote. Within two Republican administrations it has cost us trillions and trillions in national debt and deficit. He brings this up because he likens the performance of this Council to date and has hope for the new members because they have had some of the highest tax rates and most debilitating results when you look at the bond issue and the tax titles and the ascending tax possessions. He hopes that change occurs. On the Federal level the people of the United States got stiffed. On the state level the people of Massachusetts got stiffed and he feels unequivocally the residents of Amesbury are getting stiffed and the City Council needs to change it.

9. Council Response to Public Comment

10. Public Hearings:

2016-006 An Order to appropriate the overlay surplus as determined by the Board of Assessors – Mayor Gray sponsor

Summary: this order will authorize the use of overlay surplus for the funding of the Revaluation and Triennial certification work of FY2017.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendation.

Jason DiScipio stated that funds for the triennial revaluation were not budgeted for this year. We have come up with a way to fund it. We had deemed the overlay \$60,000 in surplus and we are just asking you to allow us to use that for revaluation services.

The Public hearing was opened.

Jim Thivierge stated that in searching the DOR website you could find the form on free cash. On the bottom it would say Overlay Surplus. He stated he has never seen that number greater than zero. In the budget it stops at 2014. In the recap sheet if you notice 2.d.1 it notes Allowance for expenditures and abatements, there is a figure there. We don't what the total is for expenditures and we don't know what the total is for abatements and we don't know what the Overlay is unless you go to the schedule. The lack of transparency is so rampant and he does not believe the Assessor does not give that information. In the order it says that the Board of Assessors on November 5, 2015 be transferred for the purpose of the triennial revaluation for 2017. I got the minutes from the Clerk's Office and it is not in the minutes anywhere. There is no mention of \$60,000. Until that number is disclosed you should not vote on it.

Councilor Scorzoni closed the public hearing.

Councilor Stanganelli noted that this Council did not exist at that time and if they have authority to make any changes.

Councilor Scorzoni stated they did not.

City Clerk, Bonnijo Kitchin stated that they were approved by the previous Council and she is not certain what is in those minutes and would have to go back to listen.

Mr. Thivierge interjected that those were the Assessor's minutes.

Mr. DiScipio stated that discussion was held in Executive Session which is not open to public review.

Mr. Thivierge stated that point of order it should be held in public session.

Councilor Einson asked if the \$60,000 covers the full expense and if it exhausted the line item.

Mr. DiScipio stated that it does not and it does cover the full expense. The remainder of the overlay for all years is \$1.8 million.

Councilor Sickorez moved to accept and approve 2016-006 to transfer \$60,000 from the overlay surplus for the funding of the Revaluation and Triennial certification work of FY2017 as submitted. Councilor Bartley seconded. Roll Call 8-Yes Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present

2016-011 An Order to authorize a transfer from Ambulance Receipts to Fire Expenses for the purpose of purchasing a new Ambulance – Mayor Gray Sponsor
Summary: Transfer \$185,000 from Ambulance Receipts to Fire Expenses to cover purchase of a new ambulance.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendation.

Chief Berkenbush stated that they are looking to purchase a new Demers ambulance from a vendor out of Hopkinton, MA; Bulldog fire apparatus. It is the Box style that we have had before. The cost is \$176,346.00. He stated that his original proposal was to do a lease purchase for three years to keep his fixed costs at a constant level for three years and beyond. This ambulance will replace a Miller/McCoy remount that was put on a Ford F-450 chassis which has motor problems and due to rust he does not believe it will pass licensure of state inspection due the end of the month. Procuring this in this fashion does comply with MGL. They are using HGAC which is a cooperative purchase government to government program. There are 40 towns in the Commonwealth that already use this service. In doing a three year finance purchase this will appear for the next two years and this is the corrected bill.

Councilor Scorzoni opened the public hearing.

Jim Thivierge stated that he is not satisfied with what is in this folder. The explanation is not satisfactory, the duration should be in there. The public is paying for this. The schedule in the recap sheet that is signed has \$780k that was appropriated on June 9. There is \$185k here which exceeds that balance unless the Chief can give me the current balance.

Chief Berkenbush stated that the current balance as of December 15, 2015 is \$555,424.00.

Mr. Thivierge stated that this should go to ordinance to check this stuff out. The problem here is that the ambulance revolving fund exceeds the statutory limit of 1% and is more in excess of 2%. This type of government is underperforming for the taxpayer that it is alarming. This needs to be enterprised as well as Youth. Under 950 CMR 32.0506 which allows verbal requests through the chair he wants the abatements and exemptions associated with the overlay. He wants to request that the Council display the balance of overlay surplus on the website under their page. If it is \$1.8 million I want to see it up there.

Councilor Scorzoni closed the public hearing.

Councilor Sherwood asked what the life expectancy is.

Chief Berkenbush stated 10 years and then phased through other types of service.

Councilor Sherwood moved to affirm 2016-011 as amended in the records submitted by the fire chief to reflect a lease payment of \$64,000 rather than a capital payment of \$185,000.

Councilor Sickorez seconded. Roll Call 8-Yes Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present

2016-012 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$525,000 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs – Mayor Gray sponsor

Summary: Funding from this grant will be used for the following purposes:

- Design coordination with Mass DOT of Riverwalk, kayak launch, and bulkhead design.
- Permitting/legal costs of Riverwalk, kayak launch, and bulkhead design
- LSP remediation permits of Riverwalk, kayak launch, and bulkhead design
- Construction of planting and other improvements
- Design of bike trail
- Permitting/legal costs of bike trail

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendations.

Bill Scott handed out a letter addressed to Mayor Gray dated January 26, 2016 outlining the purpose of the grant and the scope. Shoreline planting for the bulkhead wall; Riverwalk and Kayak launch design at Heritage Park at Water St. and the connector trail design between Rocky Hill Rd and Elm St. The stated is looking to connect that regional trail and so we are trying to keep the pace with the state to get a design to make the full connection. The funds result from the bond bill that we requested \$1 million and we were granted this \$525k. We have asked DOT to enter the project into the FY2017 schedule and we will be starting soon to do the design of the Riverwalk portion. A portion behind Stop & Shop is a design that we will enter onto the tip to get future funding.

Councilor Lavoie asked if there is any matching requirement to this grant.

Mr. Scott stated that there was not.

Councilor Scorzoni commented that the City Council met with Representative Jim Kelcourse with respect to some of Amesbury priorities and he thanked both Rep. Kelcourse and Senator Ives for their help in going after funding like this and the bond bill.

Councilor Scorzoni opened and closed the public hearing.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$525,000 as presented. Councilor McClure seconded. Roll Call 8-Yes Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present

Councilor Lavoie asked if we could move the matter of 2016-017 for a first reading out of order so that Mr. Desmarais can go home. Paul seconded and it was unanimous.

2016-017 A Resolution to accept the expenditure of \$45,000 in capital funding for the purpose of purchasing a new DPW Trackless MT6 Tractor (Sidewalk Plow) – Mayor Gray Sponsor

Summary: In the Fiscal Year 2016 Operating Budget, the City Council appropriated \$431,500 from the Capital Projects fund for the purpose of the purchase of a new DPW Trackless MT6 Tractor (Sidewalk Plow)

Councilor Sherwood read the Resolution into the record.

Mr. Desmarais stated that there are now 3 pieces of sidewalk equipment including this piece. After last year's winter this is essential to keep the sidewalks clear when there is snow over 12". It has a V-plow or a straight plow or can be used as a snow blower. It will essentially replace the 2000 bombardier which we will dispose of at some point in the future. We still use it but it doesn't work in big storms. This is off the state bid list.

Councilor Scorzoni asked about \$431k that was appropriated last year out of the operating budget to cover capital expenditures including this but he has not seen the back up for the original appropriation that ties the funding to these projects that you are referencing. We see the capital plan but not necessarily the funding tied to that being approved. He stated that he didn't think this was necessarily tied to Mr. Desmarais to get the information but he thinks getting that information would be helpful to him.

Councilor McClure stated that she believed this came about by putting money in last year's budget for the Capital Improvement Plan and this is the money that was appropriated at budget time and that is why this is a resolution and not an order that we usually would send to Finance and run through that process.

Mr. Desmarais stated that was his recollection as well but he did not have any details.

Councilor Sherwood asked about the price.

Mr. Desmarais stated that the \$45 is part of a three year lease/purchase.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve as presented Councilor McClure seconded. Roll Call 8-Yes, Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present.

2016-013 An Ordinance to request that the City Council vote to amend the Amesbury Zoning Bylaw and Amesbury Overlay Zoning Map – Mayor Gray sponsor
Summary: The proposed zoning amendments seek to modify the existing Renewable Energy Development District (REDD) boundary to include specific parcels not currently included in the overlay zoning district and to make modifications to the provisions of Section 11 and Section XI.S of the Amesbury Zoning Bylaw.

Councilor Sherwood read the January 16, 2016 Ordinance Committee recommendation and a copy of the recommended changes were in each of the Councils packets. He also read the Planning Board recommendation.

Nipun Jain handed out map changes and explained that the changes are to extend the boundaries of the existing renewable energy development district. There are specific parcels that will be added which is marked in yellow. Those specific parcels show that 80% of the land area in the proposed addition is city owned and the remaining is privately owned. Of the total area 90% is underutilized or under developed and has severe constraints on further re-use of those parcels. This would allow specifically for future redevelopment opportunities specifically through the solar energy facilities. Given the constraints, that it the most viable redevelopment scenario.

The language changes are a function of the intended new uses through the overlay. District change; if solar energy facilities were to be allowed on landfills then the specific definitions as they pertain to the structures would be part of the energy facilities such as the solar rays. That was part of the reason to clarify the open space definition and also to allow the Planning Board, which is the permitting agency for those facilities; to have the ability to wave dimensional requirements on landfills which are considered already developed properties.

The most important part of the language change is the change of the performance standards as they pertain to allowing the solar facilities on landfills and they are based on recommendations from MASS DEP.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that the original renewable district and having the overlay district established was a requirement of the green communities program.

Mr. Jain stated that they created an overlay for specific areas in the city which would be most suitable for that use.

Councilor Scorzoni stated that they have a proposal for this specific site. A proponent has come in and they have won a bid and have a footprint that falls within this space but it is not the entire space. Why are we expanding the district if we have development that is already cited in the works and covers most of this already?

Mr. Jain stated that the parcel that consists of the landfill is the majority of the yellow area and there is a proposal. However, they would not be able to pursue the installation of that facility without the zoning change because it is not going to be enough allowed use on the parcel.

Why are we adding other parcels in that yellow area? Part of it is all of the uses on those parcels are non-conforming and if they were to be discontinued the minimum lot area in the office park is 2.5 acres. They would never be able to come into conformity or qualify for further development. This one use creates the opportunity if those parcels were to be redeveloped further they would then be able to be developed as solar. As an overlay it is just another option that currently doesn't exist.

Councilor Scorzoni opened and closed the public hearing.

Councilor Stanganelli moved to approve as amended by the Ordinance Committee. Councilor McClure seconded. Roll Call 8-Yes, Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present

2016-014 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$225,865 from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources – Mayor Gray sponsor.

Summary: The Office of Community and Economic Development was awarded the 2015 Green Communities Grant to support energy conservation measures. The grant will allow Amesbury to make energy conservation updates at the Amesbury Middle School. There is no local match required for this grant.

Tom Barrasso, Energy Manager for City of Amesbury explained that this is the money for the second green community grant. The four projects to be conducted are an EMS system for the Middle School, vending misers for the Middle School, Steam Trap repair or replacement at the Middle School and Destratification Fans at the Middle School.

Councilor Scorzoni opened and closed the public hearing.

Councilor Sherwood moved to adopt as presented. Councilor McClure seconded. . Roll Call 8-Yes Einson, Lavoie, McClure, Sherwood, Sickorez, Stanganelli, Bartley, Scorzoni; McMilleon not present

11. First Readings

Orders

2016-018 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$37,711 from the Josetta Fund for the purpose of procuring a new K-9 cruiser. – Mayor Gray Sponsor

Summary: The Josetta Fund has generously gifted this grant to the City for the purchase of a new K-9 cruiser. The IRS recognizes the Josetta Fund as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization pursuant to section 501C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Councilor Sickorez moved to send 2016-018 to the Finance Committee and hold a public hearing at the City Council meeting on March 8, 2016. Councilor Bartley seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

2016-020 An Order to appropriate an insurance payment in the amount of \$39,900 from MIIA per MGL CH44; §53. – Mayor Gray Sponsor

Summary: Amesbury has been reimbursed from Massachusetts Inter-local Insurance Association for Claim No. M15AP92330, damage to a front-line cruiser, 2010 Ford CV, - 110633, DOL 12/20/2015.

Councilor Sickorez moved to send 2016-020 to Finance Committee and hold a public hearing at the City Council meeting on March 8, 2016. Councilor Stanganelli seconded and it was voted Unanimous.

***Discussion of topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours before the meeting.

13. Adjournment was moved by Councilor Sickorez at 10:00 pm and seconded by Councilor Stanganelli. It was voted Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Dunning
Assistant City Clerk